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Red Cross Outpost denied federal funding

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

"We are here because we have abruptly found out early this spring that we no longer meet the requirements to receive the Federal Canada Summer Jobs grant," opened Joan Barton, volunteer with the Wilberforce Heritage Guild.

Volunteers Barton and Linda Cameron visited Highlands East council on Tuesday, April 7, seeking financial support for the Red Cross Outpost Historical House Museum.

Without this grant, the heritage guild is short of funding to hire a local student to work as a museum guide for the months of July and August.

The amount requested was $4,000.

"It is important because it is the first Red Cross Outpost in Ontario. When the program was phased out in 1963 the building went into the hands of the municipality," said Barton. "In 1992, the Wilberforce Heritage Guild was created, partnering with the municipality to open the building as a museum."

The Heritage Guild is a not-for-profit organization that has funded the operating costs of the museum for the past 33 years. Hiring the local student is the largest cost of the museum, with some other expenses including insurance, furnishings and equipment, cleaning, and promotion of the museum.

The Red Cross Outpost is a crucial space for connection and community in Wilberforce. The museum is regularly opened for Scrabble gaming afternoons, hosts Canada Day celebrations, a high tea

see RED CROSS page 13

A mystery afoot in Wilberforce
Performers at the Wilberforce Legion this past weekend, for a showing of the Loop Troupe's *Art of Deception*, written by Mary Barker. The show had all attendees enjoying the performance, which had a full house both nights. More photos inside this edition. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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Next steps for new governance model

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

A historic conversation took place around the County Council table last week, when the topic of an affordability and governance structure study was brought forward.

The purpose of the study is to recognize efficiencies and gaps presented by the two-tiered municipal structure in Haliburton County.

"I encourage all members of council to approach this discussion with openness, and a focus on the long term interest of our community," opened Warden Dave Burton, the mayor of Highlands East. "This is an opportunity to shape the future for how we govern, and ultimately, how we serve the people."

Burton noted that while the conversation will be starting with the current sitting council, it will be the decision of the next council, slated for a 2026-2030 term, to make the final call.

County CAO Gary Dyke kicked off the conversation, noting that considerations around ongoing and significant fiscal pressure resulted in a difficult budget process. "We saw a significant escalation in external costs to the County, on top of the demands we have with respect to the direct related County costs."

"Both layers of council had to take what I would deem to be extraordinary measures to mitigate the tax rate increase," said Dyke, noting the deferral of capital projects and expenditures in an effort to keep rates low. "The ultimate goal is not only the facilitation of growth," said Dyke, "but to create a stable economy."

Dyke outlined a number of challenges felt as a community, and as a government agency, including a complex financial landscape, external pressures, a highly residential tax base, significant upcoming funding gaps, and an unsustainable approach to governance as a multi-tiered system.

Through a study developed to navigate these gaps and challenges, Dyke hopes to move forward in a constructive manner. He shared that the intent of the study is to provide clarity about the current environment, create affordability for taxpayers, modernize the governance model, and support a stable and strong economy.

From a broader context, Dyke noted that municipalities pay for high-cost services outside our control, and are limited by property taxes as the primary source of revenue. "It's one of the most inefficient revenue generating tools we have," said Dyke. With 98 per cent of revenue coming in from residential taxes, that hovers at five times higher than the provincial standard. "The infrastructure funding model is unpredictable and insufficient," he said.

While the tax base resides primarily amongst residential units, the after-tax household income hovers at 17 per cent lower than the provincial average, based on 2021 Census numbers.

On a slide titled "Governance: Time for Modernization", Dyke shared that the population of Haliburton County sits at 20,500, with five separate municipal organizations. "Is this the most efficient system of governance that exists?" he asked. "I'm not saying it is or it isn't, but that's the question."

"The underlying piece we need to look at going forward, is when you look at the complexities of a municipality in 2026, being asked to solve 21st century problems and complexities with a system of governance that was created in the 19th century," he said. "Is it the best system we have?"

Dyke warned against a risk of status quo, with reduced services, loss of community-based assets, deferred infrastructure renewal work, and an increased tax burden.

He then introduced the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN); an organization created by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, dedicated to improving and supporting economic growth and enhancing quality of life. While the CAO noted that they do have capacity and skills able to conduct a study of the local governance internally, he sees the value in bringing in an organization like EORN to ensure bias doesn't play a part in the findings.

Next steps for the study are to engage the consulting team, complete the study by the end of July, present to council and the province on the findings, before the municipal election nomination period ends on Aug. 21. By December of this year, staff will bring the reports to the newly-elected councils.

"We're all facing some really serious pressures," commented Deputy Warden Liz Danielsen, the mayor of Algonquin Highlands. "I'm extremely supportive of moving forward with this process."

"I've looked at that proposal for a number of hours," said Councillor Murray Fearrey, the mayor of Dysart et al. "And it's scary to me. It looks like there's going to be an average of seven to eight million dollars added to the tax base each year. That's not sustainable … what happens at the end of the day if we do the study and it comes up that we can't come up with a reasonable tax rate down the road?"

Dyke noted that he sees opportunities for significant savings throughout the process. "This isn't the final solution," he said. "But if we don't do something, we run the greater risk … where we become irrelevant in any decision making in our future by not demonstrating that we understand the problem."

Councillor McKechnie voiced his concerns around the potential taxpayers' increased rate, and demanded full transparency in the entirety of the process to benefit the community as a whole.

Dyke reiterated that the project proposed is a community benefit study. "This isn't benefitting Gary Dyke, this isn't benefitting the County of Haliburton. This is benefitting the community of Haliburton County, and making sure all those people have a voice."

It was agreed that this current council would develop the foundation for decisions around restructuring, but it would be the responsibility of the next council to implement any changes that may arise from the study findings.

County council members unanimously agreed to engage EORN to lead the study, and move forward with the project, with seven votes in favour of the report. Lisa Schell, the deputy mayor of Minden Hills, was absent from the meeting.

Doc(k) days of spring

Bristol Foster, featured in the *Art of Adventure,* sits with Alison Reid, the director of the film, offered a Q and A after the viewing during Doc(k) Days this past weekend at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion. /submitted

A rainy weekend was a perfect backdrop for the annual Doc(k) Days at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion. "It was a great day of beautiful connections - between the films and the people attending," said Myra Stephen, one of the organizers of the event. "We ended up celebrating the achievements and inspiration of people in their 90s in each of the films." Stephen noted that the organizers asked the audience to give the film a rating as they walk out the door after each movie. The average for the ratings together from all four films, came in at over 90 per cent, with the audience confirming they liked or loved the films. Pictured, the Those Other Movies Team, from left to right, Leslie Haller, Midori Nagai, Tammy Rea, Isabel Buttler, Donna McCallum, Myra Stephen, Lori Roberts, Trish Hewitt, Bob Haller, Lesley Marshall, Joleen Thomas (missing: Kip Kelly). /submitted

Fleming College part of provincial first

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

Ontario colleges have been a hot topic for discussion since the Ford government has been in power for the province, and this week was no different.

For the first time in provincial history, two colleges have opted to merge their management, in an effort to streamline their academic process and mitigate any inefficiencies in their governance structure.

The news came on Friday, April 10 that Fleming College and St. Lawrence College would be combining their management teams moving forward. Fleming has campuses in Peterborough, Lindsay, and Haliburton, while St. Lawrence is located in Kingston, Brockville, and Cornwall.

In a press release shared by Theresa Knott, Interim President of Fleming College, and Glenn Vollebregt, President and CEO of St. Lawrence College, it was noted that the colleges have been working closely with the provincial government, to ensure a smooth integration with minimum impacts on students and communities, including the Haliburton site. The leadership team ensured that there are no immediate planned changes to local brands, programs, campuses, services, or student supports that would come from the announcement.

"This integration represents a forward-looking investment in our students and communities," said Knott. "By bringing our strengths together, we are positioning ourselves to deliver more opportunities, more innovation, greater access, and a stronger foundation for the future across our combined regions and campuses."

"We are committed to ensuring that students have the tools, programs, and support they need to succeed in a rapidly evolving economy," added Vollebregt. "This integration gives us the scale and capability to serve more students, offer more opportunity, and build a stronger institution for the long term."

It was noted that the 'New College' will have a single management team, with Vollebregt serving as the initial president and CEO, and Knott as the associate president and chief academic officer of the team.

The next step of the integration will include operational planning and community engagement, according to the statement shared by the management. These steps will be completed under board oversight, and in line with provincial requirements, with further updates to be shared as more information becomes available.

"The integration reflects a shared vision to create greater scale and capability, while better aligning programs and capacity with regional labour market needs," reads the press release. "Over time, students will benefit from expanded academic pathways, increased access to specialized programs, enhanced research opportunities, and broader work-integrated learning experiences."

The merging of management marks a first for provincial colleges. While the process will take time, with no immediate changes underway, it is speculated that a new name for the shared colleges will be presented in the near future.

School's Cool returns thanks to County contribution

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

Earlier this spring, concerns were raised around the potential cancellation of SIRCH's School's Cool program; an initiative that has been in place for over 25 years, offering support for families entering the local school system.

With funding unable to be secured by the not-for-profit, the community program found itself on the chopping block. The concern was brought to County Council, who added it to their agenda with the possibility to access the newly implemented Community Safety and Wellbeing fund, put in place just this budget season to accommodate gaps in the human services.

While the agenda item was bumped due a cancelled council meeting in light of the March ice storm, with the timelines needed for funding, council assigned CAO Gary Dyke to facilitate the request within the required operating window. Council approved the motion to support the program with a contribution of $7,500.

On April 8, SIRCH Executive Director Gena Robertson, stood before council to share the realities of kids for school, noting that one in three children are not prepared for kindergarten. "It's not really about parenting," she said. "It reflects the changing conditions of families in communities across our region."

Robertson noted a number of socioeconomic factors that play a role in changing the playing field for children entering school, including limited interaction with other kids, food insecurity, and housing challenges. "They don't catch up," she said. "The gap just gets wider."

That's where School's Cool comes into play. Robertson called the system an "upstream approach," noting that the program aims to intervene before persistent patterns take shape as routines develop.

The six-week program, totalling 96 hours over the course of the summer, provides over 100 activities, specifically designed to have an evaluation component to assess the preparation of kids entering the school system. "The program is targeted, it is curriculum based, it's early intervention, it is delivered in a group setting without parents, so they come as if they are going to school," said Robertson. "They learn routines, they learn how to get along."

With the funding request approved, the program will be running once again this summer. On April 10, SIRCH sent out an official press release, noting that up to 21 children will be accepted for the 2026 season, with a focus on four-year-olds entering Junior Kindergarten this fall, who may be experiencing developmental delays or challenges such as speech and language delays, difficulty with social interaction, or low confidence in group settings.

More information on the program can be found at www.schoolscool.com. "It's important for parents to not feel guilty about not being ready," said Robertson. "Sometimes, that's just how it happens."

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Farmers' Market aims sights at food insecurity

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

With an abundance of rocks in Haliburton County, there are plenty of hurdles with growing your own food. Living in a plant hardiness zone of four comes with its unique challenges, in addition to some very hungry critters outside.

Everybody has to eat, and if it was up to Lexy Feinstein, marketing manager for Haliburton County Farmers' Market, everyone would have the right to whole, nutritious foods.

With the offerings at this year's farmers' markets, she hopes getting nutritious, fresh food will be much easier for customers.

"I am really passionate about food security and keeping food as local as possible," she said.

Starting her position with the Haliburton County Farmers' Market three years ago, Feinstein has made it her goal to bring local producers together, foster a community around food, and build the idea of becoming a small-scale food producer.

Food that is produced locally reduces the amount of emissions made, reduces the amount of pest management needed, and contributes to a local cycle of food production and economic stimulation.

Feinstein says that her position allows her to act as liaison between growers, distributors, and consumers. Her goal is to spearhead the community and act as a light towards a sustainable food system in the area.

As a homesteader herself, she knows that to have enough food for her family and to sell it, growers need to plan their harvest in the previous year.

To grow food in the community, people need to share their knowledge with other producers to increase the overall chances of success.

The more people who grow food in our community, the more excess there will be to sell and share with others.

This year there will be two market locations, both returning to their respective sites in Minden and Haliburton.

Feinstein says that they hope to host family days for visitors at the Tuesday market in Haliburton. These days will focus on providing entertainment to families and their kids, with an emphasis on the homeschooling group that visits Head Lake Park.

Educating children at home and letting them assist with food production is an excellent way to inspire youth to produce their own food when they get older.

There will be several new vendors at both markets this year. Visitors to the markets will be able to purchase baked goods, sweets, food ready to eat, maple syrup, garlic, and fresh produce, to name but a selection of the goods offered.

Feinstein assures that visitors will have access to both vegan and gluten free products to adhere to a variety of dietary restrictions.

"I have a high amount of gratitude for the vendors that come," said Feinstein

In order to be an official farmers' market with Farmers' Markets Ontario, the markets have to have at least 51 per cent of their vendors needing to be agri-based businesses.

Affordability of fresh produce is an absolute game changer in the county, says Feinstein. The organization is excited for visitors to bring high energy, excitement, and feverous interest in locally produced goods.

"Every vendor is happy to be there," said Feinstein.

Last year, the markets saw an estimated 2,600 in a day during their highest peaks, with 2,000 daily visitors being the norm during July and August.

The conversation around homesteading and small scale food production has been gradually growing, says Feinstein. With initiatives like Women in Homesteading, she says that there are more conversations about locally grown food now than ever before.

"I hope with the interest, we have more small-scale growers come out to the market," she said.

With two markets, the vibes are entirely unique.

The Haliburton Market - with more vendors - caters to those doing their grocery shopping during the week, families visiting the park, and people getting a bite to eat during their lunch break. While still dedicated to the community, Feinstein says that the Minden market has been more popular with seasonal tourists.

"The Minden market has an eclectic, artistic feeling," said Feinstein.

This year, the farmers market is offering single-day weekend booths to allow small scale producers to get a taste for vending at the market. They encourage anyone that is interested in vending or growing food to get in contact with the organization.

The Farmers' Market will run on Saturdays in Minden from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and in Haliburton on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The first market will be in Minden on May 9 and the final market will be in October.

The Farmers' Market is always looking for new ideas, fresh faces, and more local growers. If you are interested in trying your hand at vending, please email the market through their website at hcfma.ca.

For now, the markets can only accept more artisans if more growers join their ranks.

With the collaborations of organizations across the county, they hope to reach a plethora of people and share their love and knowledge of food production.

In the near future, perhaps Haliburton County will have a sustainable food system that fosters community, sharing, and bartering.

"We are always open to conversations, new ideas, and partnerships," said Feinstein. "We love new ideas."

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Calendars for a cause

The cast and crew of the latest production from Highlands Little Theatre, *Calendar Girls,* announced that the sale of their specially produced calendars during the run of the show netted $2,500 for Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre at Abbey Gardens near West Guilford. Following a tour of the facility and an explanation of the programming offered at the retreat centre, on Sunday, April 12, members of the *Calendar Girls* team made the presentation to Executive Director Barb Smith-Morrison. Among those on hand for the presentation are, from the left, Jack Brezina, John Jackson, Barb Smith-Morrison displaying one of the calendars, Kate Butler, Cathy McIlmurray, Rita Jackson, Karen Frybort, Norma Bingham, Kate Hall, David Zilstra, Amy Brohm and Elyse Boisvert. A limited number of the calendars are still available from Brooksong. Minimum donation $25. Photo by Maryssa Danilko.

Sound studio ready for business

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

It's been a long time coming, but musician and sound engineer Mike Knight has officially opened his studio in the heart of the Haliburton Highlands. Apple Tree Recording Studio, the home of MAKKsound, is located smack dab between Minden and Haliburton, and truly has all the bells and whistles needed to make any sort of sounds sing.

"There's two main ideas for this studio," said Knight. "One is to fulfil the needs of the local area, and the second is to provide a service for retreat options."

The orange and black domed hut at the back of Knight's property has been meticulously tweaked and altered to optimize sound waves within the space. With every little detail accounted for, right down to specialized sockets and curved trim, sounds are designed to roll around the space with fluidity and freedom.

But while the technical side of the space is detail-oriented and precise, the actual style is designed to replicate that of 'a cottage kitchen' , said Knight. "It's built unclinical," he said, noting the warm colours and flowing artwork adorning the walls. "There are soft angles, very country style. We wanted to capitalize on the shape of the building."

And inside the building is a musician's dream come true. With drums, guitars, bass, a piano, a keyboard, a voice recording room, and every technical detail needed to enhance the sound, any musical act could easily assemble an album within the warm rooms. But Knight recognizes it's not that easy. "Their songs are their babies," he said, noting the vulnerability of making music, recording the product, and putting it out in the world. "I'm here to help make connections, and to bring it to life."

One artist who has used the space is local singer/songwriter Jodi Timgren. The folk artist is regularly heard on the airwaves of Canoe FM, and one of her news songs, *Masquerade*, was recorded in the Apple Tree Recording Studio.

Knight starts his sessions with a consultation period; connecting with the artist, learning about their visions, and discussing ways to bring it to life. He then saddles into the recording box, and gets to work while the musicians dive in. "You can record everything together," he said, "and then you go back to basics and record everything separately."

While the studio has had some locals dabbling with the sound waves, Knight intends to hold an open house in May, to welcome curious musicians into the space, and encourage them to explore all it has to offer. Information on using the space can be found at www.makksound.com. Knight noted that the space can also be used for voice-overs, music for jingles, and audio recordings. "It's a labour of love," he said, as he looked around the warm space. "But there isn't anything else like this in the county. Trust me."

Sound engineer Mike Knight of MAKKsound has officially opened Apple Tree Recording Studio between Minden and Haliburton. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

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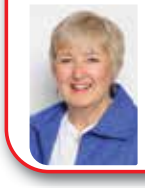

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Light the fire

Editorial

Emily Stonehouse

I BELIEVE IT is the responsibility of local newspapers to use their pages to hold organizations and civil servants accountable for their actions.

It's something I am mindful of, and put into practice when applicable.

Sometimes editorials may seem cutting, but they take a stance; posing the possibilities of change and tangible momentum.

And the same way I will hold individuals accountable, I will also celebrate the actions of others.

Gary Dyke, the CAO of the County of Haliburton, alongside his current roster of staff, deserves a round of applause.

He carried forward an idea that's been floating in the minds of locals for decades. And while he never said the cursed "A-Word" (amalgamation) for the duration of the council meeting last week, he planted a seed, lit a fire.

The split-tiered system of governance has been put into play for the lifetimes of the vast majority of residents. I'd hazard a guess that many still don't fully understand it. And while charts and infographics are circulated on social media splitting up municipal, provincial, and federal responsibilities, the great divide between upper and lower tier local governments often falls through the cracks.

When I worked for the Township of Minden Hills, we would often say that items would be "bumped up the hill"; meaning that certain tasks were County projects. And honestly, I was a senior staffer for Minden, and there still seemed to lack rhyme or reason for the projects that stayed down the hill versus up.

It was one of the major reasons I stepped away from the role. Behind closed doors, there were a whole lot of circular conversations; spinning topics that were chasing their tails, seeking an answer, and never quite knowing where they landed.

And I am not one for inefficiencies.

The only solution to this constant tailspin, is to bring the groups together.

Gary Dyke brought that to the table. But he did it properly. He laid the groundwork, he explored the options. "When you look at the complexities of a municipality in 2026, being asked to solve 21st century problems and complexities with a system of governance that was created in the 19th century," he said. "Is it the best system we have?"

He said exactly what we've all been thinking. For decades. And he didn't push or challenge councillors, he laid it out flat. Change has to happen. We don't know how, don't know when, but it absolutely needs to happen.

It was clear that the major decision around the A-Word would be a future council problem. But this is a bigger start than I've seen before. This is an encouragement to move forward, a challenge to think outside the box, and an opportunity to move ahead without the gaping holes of inefficiencies; tightening the circle of responsibility and allowing for our community to actually grow.

I look forward to seeing how this pans out. Unfortunately, there's a risk it may die between the council terms; dropped through the gaps of conversation when new faces take their seats at the table. But I believe the seed has been plated, the fire lit.

Let's keep this conversation going, and filter through the inefficiencies to create a community that prioritizes the possibilities of change, and tangible momentum into the future.

When elder care becomes elder abuse ...

Pair, Ponder

Poke, Peel

Fay Martin

THE TORONTO Star's coverage of a current court case has slit the belly and exposed the entrails of the absolute unpreparedness of the legal system – and perhaps society more broadly - to deal with the nastier aspects of elder care.

Here is the story, based on reportage on April 11/26 by Betsy Powell and an opinion piece by Rosie Dimano: 73-year-old Eva Samonas, a frail, diminutive, retired clerical worker, was charged with negligence causing the death in January 2024 of her frail, 90-pound, 96-year-old mother, Vasiliki Atonasovski. Vasiliki slipped off the sofa and remained sitting on the floor for two nights and three days before emergency workers took her to hospital, where she died. A large open sore on her buttocks was contaminated by the urine and feces in which she sat those three days.

Eva did not have legal representation; her case was presented by an Amicus Curiae (friend of the court) whose job is to ensure the judge has exposure to both sides of the case.

Her defense is that she couldn't move her mother and misapprehended the danger of her remaining there. Her mother was diagnosed in 2017 with dementia, paranoid, stubborn, a life-long hoarder who refused to allow her belongings to be tidied, refused to be bathed, hit Eva with a stick and had locked her out of the house.

Eva said her mother 'often' sat on the floor and refused attempts to move her, even had Eva been physically able. She would not allow Eva to call 911 because she thought, once removed, she would never return to the house (almost certainly true, given the hoarding, disorder and disrepair of the apartment).

Eva's brother, who had 'abdicated responsibility' in 2022 (perhaps when Eva's partner died and she came to live with her mother) 'did what he always did and left [Eva] to figure it out on her own'. Another male relative and a male neighbour refused Eva's requests for help because they feared injuring the frail old woman. They suggested Eva call 911 but did not do it themselves.

When EMS attended, Vasiliki was near death. She was taken to hospital and Eva was charged with failing her duty of care.

This raises a dust-storm of questions.

How is adult children's duty of care for their parents the same as parental duty of care for children? Is caring a legal obligation? A moral obligation?

How does a daughter acquire and retain a duty of care when her brother can abdicate his?

What rights to support are associated with assuming a duty of care, given a medical diagnosis nine years prior that includes an expectation of some of the problematic behaviours?

On what basis did the prosecutor claim that Eva had 'responsibility to make decisions' and 'controlled her mother's life'?

Which elder, in this situation, was abused and which was the abuser?

I do not envy Justice Jane Kelly the responsibility of addressing these questions, to be delivered by May, within the constrictions of law.

She may acknowledge the limitations of the black/white, guilty/not guilty, if this/then that linearity of law to accommodate the greyness of humanity.

All mothers are not loving or loved. Neither are all daughters. Nor all sons. Nor all fathers.

All caregivers are not caring or skilled.

Responsibility is not synonymous with control.

Medical diagnosis does not guarantee treatment or investment.

All neglect is not abuse.

Abuse can be intentional, emotional as well as physical, delivered by the frail and victimized.

We would all like this story to be a one-off, an unbelievable and rare confluence of circumstances.

I doubt it is.

I expect it will become much more common as burgeoning need meets declining resources, and more caregivers are trapped in circumstances they cannot manage, with no off-ramps evident.

Surely we can do better. The question is: will we?

points of view

Tag, you're it.

Loon Tales

Steve Galea

THERE IS a prevalent belief that as you age, your nose and ears grow. I'm not sure that's true. But I can confirm that your tongue grows.

It has to. Otherwise, how are you going to keep so many names on the tip of it?

The average person over 60 has at least 20 names on the tip of their tongue at any given time. Some are of people. Some are of items you are trying to describe. But don't worry, most of them fall off three hours after they are needed.

A recent conversation with a friend of mine illustrated the point nicely.

"Remember that time we went fishing with … uh, geeze, that tall guy from Kenora … what was his name?" my friend began.

"Ummm, yeah … Bill?" I replied.

"No, that's not it," my buddy said. "Big bushy beard …"

"Bob?" I guessed.

"No," he answered. "Bald spot and a big red birth mark …"

"Bradley?" I speculated.

"No. Darn it, it's on the tip of my tongue," he replied.

"Mine too," I said.

Three hours later, we remembered we were talking about our good friend Bill.

We did this six more times in the next five minutes.

This is not a big deal until you meet a person on the street whose name you should know but can't remember at that moment. Or when you are trying to describe a part at a hardware store.

A fellow I once met, whose name is also on the tip of my tongue, once told me that you should not present a problem unless you also have a solution. So here is mine.

I think we should all wear name tags.

I never have problems remembering the name of a person if he or she is wearing a name tag at the time – so long as they are in reading range.

Before you say it would be highly inconvenient to have your name on every hat, shirt, or coat you have, let me say this. You've got a point, if your name is Allesandro or Tellulah-Jane. Otherwise not so much.

In a perfect world, where every person, was named "That guy", this would not be required.

Think of the advantages. First, it would help revive the lost art of embroidery. Also, old guys wouldn't have to sidestep your name all the time by referring to you by your most prominent, least flattering, feature. As in, "I was talking to your friend, the dim-witted one with the big eyes …"

Put that way, it seems reasonable right?

After all, experts suggest communication skills are among the most important abilities to have in the modern world. And that starts with remembering a person's name.

Am I suggesting that everyone having their name embroidered on their shirt, hat, or jacket would solve all our problems? Of course not. But it would make mingling more effortless. And it would also make finding your coat at the end of a party a lot easier.

Unless, of course, there were three Steves.

Then when someone picked up a coat, they would have to say which Steve does this belong to?

And that person would eventually have to say, "The dim-witted one with the big eyes …"

Which isn't perfect, but at least I'd have my coat.

pic *of the* past

Wes Lytle submitted this photo of the former Red Cross Hospital, which now houses Canoe FM Radio Station in Haliburton. Lytle found the image in a pile of photos picked up at a local yard sale. /submitted

Listening together

Green meadow

Tales from the great

Lynda Shadbolt

WE ALL carry stories within us - quiet, powerful threads that weave together who we are, where we have been, and what we value. Some stories are loud and adventurous, filled with travel, risk, and discovery. Others are softer, rooted in caregiving, friendship, or the steady rhythm of everyday life. Yet each one matters. Each one has the power to connect us, to teach us, and to remind us that we are not alone.

Just as important as telling our stories, however, is our willingness to truly listen to the stories of others. This past weekend at the annual Doc(k) Days in Haliburton, I was reminded of just how meaningful storytelling can be. Through four documentaries, I watched a range of Canadian experiences - stories shaped by passion, resilience, creativity, and service. Each film was different and themes emerged such as the power of friendship, the lasting effects of war, the pull of adventure, and the deep fulfilment found in art and volunteering.

These films were not just about individuals; they were reflections of shared human experiences that resonated far beyond the screen. *I Am the Art* offered a moving example of how life itself can become a story of creation and care. Nobuo Kubota, at 92-years-old, continued to explore art in many forms, while also caring for his wife, Lee, who lived with Alzheimer's. His story reveals a beautiful exchange - his art shaping his outlook on life, and his caregiving influenced by a lifetime of creativity. It is a reminder that even in challenging circumstances, there is room for expression, connection, and love.

Other films brought forward stories that might otherwise be forgotten. The documentary *We Lend a Hand*, about the Ontario Farmerettes, highlighted the contributions of 40,000 teenage girls during the Second World War. Their efforts played a vital role in supporting the country during a time of need. By listening to stories like these, we not only honour those who came before us, but we also gain a fuller understanding of our collective history. Similarly, stories of adventure and innovation - whether through a global expedition *The Art of Adventure* or the rise and fall of a Canadian company *Clairtone* - show how following one's passion can lead to both triumph and challenge. These narratives remind us that life is not a straight path, but a journey shaped by courage, curiosity, and perseverance.

What stood out most over the weekend was not just the stories themselves, but the shared experience of hearing them. Sitting together in the theatre, quietly attentive, people became part of something larger. In listening, we create space for empathy. We begin to understand perspectives beyond our own. We learn to appreciate the richness and diversity of human experience. In our daily lives, opportunities to listen are everywhere - in conversations with family, in moments with friends, in the stories held within our communities.

Being a good listener is a gift we can offer one another. It requires presence, patience, and an open heart. We all have a story to tell. And just as importantly, we all have the ability to listen. When we do both well, we build stronger, kinder, and more connected communities - one story at a time. Thanks to Those Other Movies who bring all of these stories to our county.

Haliburton Gymnastics announces fundraising success

Haliburton Gymnastics is excited to announce it has reached its first fundraising milestone, obtaining $200,000 in promised donations, in-kind contributions and a loan from the HCDC, which confirms the stability of the project and that it can now move into the next phase. This development marks a significant milestone for Haliburton Gymnastics and is expected to help with basic construction and the purchasing of professional gymnastics equipment.

"We are thrilled that a Gymnastic Club in Haliburton is now a reality," said executive director of Haliburton Gymnastics, Kathy Judson. "This means so much to the families of Haliburton. We're all now looking forward to seeing the doors open this summer."

The fundraising will continue in the coming months to allow for greater depth in their programming offer, as well as more equipment purchases, coach training, as well as creating funding for local youth who may not be able to afford gymnastics. The conversion of the industrial space into a gymnastics space may come with its fair share of surprises as well, so their efforts to obtain sponsors will continue. So far, there are more than 60 sponsors with the largest contributors being Haliburton Electric, The Pump Shop, Paradigm Electric, Bishop Geyers Surveying, and City Electric Supply. The continuous donations from local businesses who support this initiative are truly a testament to the generosity of this tightly knit community. There will be three fundraising events in the near future to keep an eye out for:

-Chili, Music and Karaoke at the Legion on Friday, May 22, 2026

-A Summer Night of Music at the Bonnie View on June 27, 2026

-Boshkung Smokehouse Parking Lot Party on May 29, 2026 at McFadden's

Haliburton Gymnastics will begin basic construction May 1 and is hoping to "soft open" by July with a grand opening event in August.

About Haliburton Gymnastics

Haliburton Gymnastic is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide high-calibre gymnastics and fun fitness programs to the families of Haliburton and surrounding communities that promote athletic skill development and community connection for children, teens and adults. It is the first Gymnastics Club in Haliburton in more than 40 years and is a 100 per cent community-driven and community-funded project to better serve our local youth.

Submitted

Democracy Project back with community education sessions

Voices and Votes returns ahead of October 2026 municipal election

Following a successful launch of its information and inspiration speaker series last fall, the Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project (HHHDP) is back and hosting the last of four events designed to help prepare people to get more involved in this year's municipal election.

"We know that municipal government is the most accessible level of government for everyday people to be part of, and that we all benefit when good people run for office," explained Lauren Hunter, a member of the HHHDP steering committee. "The democracy project wants to help demystify what it's like to actually do the job and equip people with the tools they need to help shape the future of our communities."

The final "Voices and Votes" session, Understanding Campaigns: How Success Happens will feature Lauren Hunter, a seasoned campaign strategist of more than 20 municipal, provincial, and federal campaigns, sharing the building blocks of a successful campaign, whether that's for elected office or for a cause people care about, along with practical tips and tools. It will take place on Tuesday, April 21 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Stanhope Fire Fighters Community Hall in Algonquin Highlands.

This session is free, non-partisan, and open to all. Recordings and presentations from the first three sessions, focused on how government works, why it matters, how to get involved, and how to get inspired to step up for our community, are available on the HHHDP.ca website, and this session will also be recorded for those who can't attend in person.

"With the October 26, 2026 municipal election fast approaching and 25 elected roles across the Haliburton Highlands needing candidates, we are focused on giving people the information and inspiration they need to get involved," said Jessica Slade, a member of the HHHDP steering committee. "It's up to all of us, as a community, to strengthen our democracy together."

The HHHDP is a project of the Haliburton County Community Cooperative, and is grateful to be financially supported by HCDC (Local Initiatives Program) and the Telling Our Stories Speaker` Series. More information and registration is available at www.hhhdp.ca.

Submitted

Correction

In our March 31 issue of the *Minden Times*, we would like to correctly acknowledge that the Seedy Saturday event was hosted by the Minden Horticultural Society. Of which, Sue Sisson is a proud member who collected donations upon entry of the event. We apologize for the error.

Minden Memories

The Kinmount hockey squad is proudly pictured here with a trophy believed to have been won during the 1946–1947 season. Back row: Dick Austin, Garland Barkwell, Clark Simpson, John O'Toole, Ralph Phillips, Bill Austin and Bill Scott. Front row: Harry Austin, Ray Zettler, Brock MacNamara, Bill Butts (goalie), Gerald Silvers, Brant Phillips and Clarence Hartin. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

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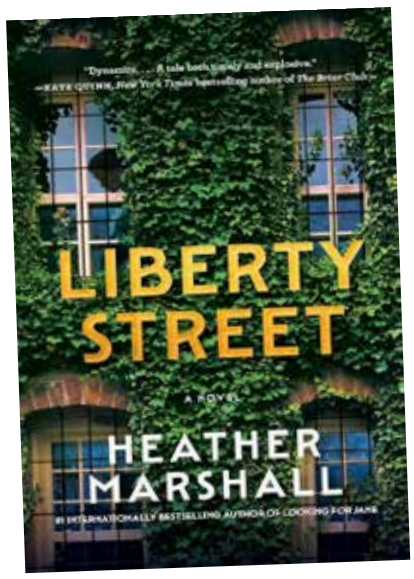
Book of the Week



In 1961, Emily Radcliffe is an editorial assistant at *Chatelaine* magazine, determined to prove herself among the country's top female reporters. When a letter from an inmate at Mercer Women's Prison lands on her desk, she goes undercover to investigate - only to discover that getting in is the easy part. Fast forward to 1996, when unidentified remains are found in a small-town Ontario cemetery. Detective Rachel Mackenzie takes on the case, tracing it back to the now-closed prison - and uncovering secrets that connect past and present in ways she never expected.

Liberty Street by Heather Marshall is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library. Visit haliburtonlibrary.ca to place a hold or learn more.

Minden Tim Hortons reopens with platinum status

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

After only a few short weeks, the Minden location of Tim Hortons has reopened their doors to the community.

In early March, the management of the Minden site announced that the facility would be closed to the public as they undergo a number of renovations to the space. According to Mike Garland, the owner of the venue, it is a requirement that every ten years, a renovation is completed at each individual site. "And ideally, around here, you don't want to do that over the summer months," he said.

Garland was able to secure a pop-up trailer for the site, to ensure that orders were completed status quo, while the renovations kept the team busy.

On April 7, the team took to Facebook to announce that the building is back up and running. With fresh paint, new furniture, and splashes of colour on the walls featuring Canadian art, the space is warm, friendly, and inviting.

But beyond the grand reopening of the site, Garland shared some extra special news. "Our incredible team has officially earned platinum status for 2025," he said. "This puts us in the top three per cent of all drive-thru Tim Hortons locations across the country, based on lightning-fast speed of service, outstanding audits on standards and food safety, amazing guest feedback, and top-tier training."

Garland was quick to thank the community for the accolade. "None of this would be possible without our passionate team and loyal guests like you," he said. "Thank you for choosing us every day."

The annual Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign will be kicking off this week at both the Haliburton and Minden locations, with proceeds going towards Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre.

Minden Tim Hortons announced their official recognition of platinum status this past week, making them one of the top Tims destinations in Canada. /submitted

Recent renovations in Minden have been completed, and the location has been reopened. /submitted

Local folk artist brings parenthood to the spotlight

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

For Devin Wilson, it's always been music.

His life, his career, his passion, his relationships, his inspiration.

Each and every chapter of his life has been woven through the weeds with sounds and songs.

As a Haliburton-based graphic designer, Wilson moved to the area with his wife during the COVID-19 pandemic. He quickly found his footing within the Haliburton County Folk Society, where he contributes his artistic talents, both in design work as well as musical tastes.

And while music now takes a backseat to his priorities around raising a family, it's been a constant companion through each and every chapter.

Wilson grew up in Brockville, where he played in a band with his brother for ten years. He went on to study design at Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) University in Toronto, which was where he met his wife during a musical performance. "For a long time, I used to think of music as something I failed as a career," said Wilson during an interview last week. "But then I think about all the things it's given me. It's given me my friends, my wife, and now, my son."

When the couple moved to the Haliburton Highlands, that's when Wilson's music tastes began to change. "I think the geography change really did it for me," he said, sharing that he was never drawn to folk music in the past. "There's something elegant to me about just having a guitar and being able to tell stories."

Wilson pulls his inspiration from musicians like Fleet Foxes, Bon Iver, and James Blake. But the turning point for folk music was hearing a James Taylor performance on YouTube. "That just opened up the floodgates for me," recalled Wilson. "It's so good, it's so tastefully done. It's one thing to want to make that music, but it's a whole other thing to try to execute it. It gets back to the roots of everything."

And the roots of the story continue to be the core of Wilson's new musical endeavours. While he was trying to "make it big" playing in the Toronto scene, he noted that the core of his passion was lost. "We were trying to make songs that would just get us bigger," he reflected, "and that didn't feel good anymore. The people who are the most successful in the long term don't believe in that."

So with his style, his reason, and his geography changing, Wilson dove into the world of folk. He refers to his style as "infusing contemporary approaches to traditional folk," and pulls inspiration from his natural surroundings, his musical colleagues, and most recently, his son.

"I used to introduce and identify myself as an artist first," he said, "and now, my first identity is a father. Fatherhood is absolutely central to my music."

Wilson noted that he's shifted gears to showcase the realities of being a parent; the highs and lows, the insecurities and surprises, and the pure joy he feels on a daily basis. "I've absolutely changed," he said. "But that's the thing about art, there's no right or wrong way to do it."

The local musician will be opening for the upcoming Haliburton County Folk Society's performance featuring Minor Gold, led by vocalists and guitarists Dan Parsons and Tracy McNeil. With roots tied to both Canada and Australia, the duo have toured around the world, taking their folksy dabbled, 1960s inspired sound to hot spots and cozy corners across the globe. They will be playing on April 18 at the Highlands Hills United Church in Minden, and tickets can be purchased through the Folk Society website.

Haliburton musician Devin Wilson will be opening for the band Minor Gold this coming weekend. Wilson pulls his musical inspiration from his role as a father. /photo by Kara Lynne Wark

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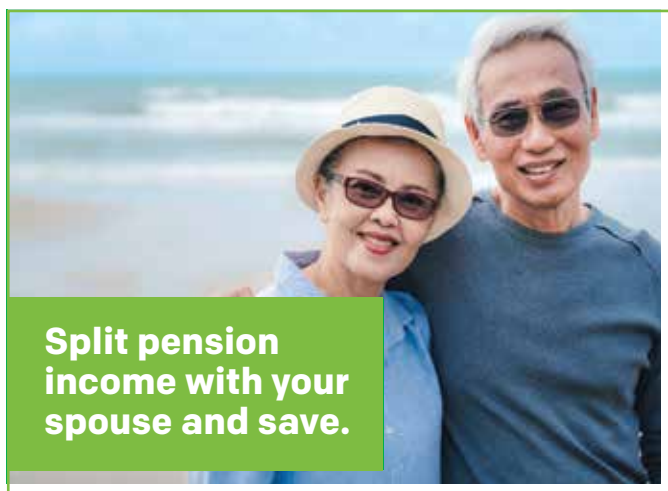

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Highland Storm U15 Rep Team celebrated champs

The U15 Highland Storm Rep team, sponsored by Cheryl Smith RE/MAX, capped off an unforgettable season by being crowned Victoria Durham League Champions - earning their spot at the OMHA U15 Tier 3 Championships held in Halton Hills two weeks ago.

Facing off against five other top teams in their division, Storm came ready.

Their tournament began early Easter Friday morning with an 8:15 a.m. matchup against the Mooretown Jr. Flags. Storm set the tone with a commanding 4–1 victory. Lucas Upton led the way with two goals, while Lucas Vale and Austin Cunningham each added one. Assists came from Hudson Meyer and Vale, while goaltender Blake Hutchinson stood strong between the pipes.

Later that evening, Storm returned to the ice to face the Prince Edward County Kings, securing a decisive 3–0 win. Hunter Hamilton delivered a hat trick, supported by assists from Tyler Hughes and Brady Burke.

With two round-robin wins, Storm earned a direct bye to the semi-finals, where they once again met the Mooretown Jr. Flags on Saturday evening. The team continued their dominant run with another shutout victory, winning 3–0. Cunningham scored twice, Hamilton added another goal and assist.

Championship Sunday saw the undefeated Storm face the Prince Edward County Kings once again. With a strong showing of support from family, friends, and fans who travelled all the way to Halton Hills and filled the stands, the atmosphere was electric. In a tightly contested battle, Cruize Neave scored the lone goal of the game, assisted by Cunningham, sealing a thrilling 1–0 victory and the

OMHA Championship title.

Goaltender Corbin Elliot was exceptional throughout the final three games, recording three consecutive shutouts and proving to be a difference-maker when it mattered most.

The Storm's defensive unit - Meyer, Burke, Hughes, James Gooley, Duncan Evans-Fockler, and Liam Milburn - played a critical role in the team's success. Their ability to shut down opponents, and maintain composure under pressure created a solid foundation for the team's championship run.

Offensively, the forward group of Neave, Hamilton, Cunningham, Vale, Upton, Chase Kerr, Hunter Peelow, Bently Bull, and Kelson Bagshaw worked cohesively, generating opportunities and capitalizing when it counted most.

This championship performance capped off an incredible season for the Storm, finishing with an impressive 24-6-6 record, a 20-game winning streak, and an outstanding 25 games unbeaten (22 wins, three ties).

Behind the bench, the team was led by Head Coach Jesse Johnson, Assistant Coach Chris Kerr, Trainer Tommy Bagshaw, Assistant Trainer Tyler Martin, and Manager Cheryl Smith.

The team extends heartfelt thanks to their dedicated coaching staff, supportive families, and the many fans who stood behind them all season long.

Most importantly, this season belongs to the players - a group that came together, persevered through a challenging start, and never stopped believing. Their resilience, commitment, and teamwork defined this championship journey.

From early adversity to ultimate victory, the U15 Highland Storm Rep team has proven what can be achieved through hard work, unity, and belief.

Congratulations to the U15 Highland Storm Rep team on a phenomenal season and a well-earned OMHA Championship title.

Submitted by Cheryl Smith and Jesse Johnson

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Red Cross summer season up to council

from page 1

event, and geocaching events.

The space is also rentable for the community to use, which is regularly used by Central Food Network, Loop Troupe, Wilberforce FUNraisers, and the Essonville Church Committee.

The museum is alight with seasonal delight, with events on Halloween and around Christmas. This year, the museum was host to a special Christmas carolling event that was hugely successful.

"We were surprised how well attended it was, that is something that is going to get bigger," said Barton.

To earn funding, the museum sells souvenirs to visitors, collects donations throughout the year, and seeks grants from government agencies. Typically, the museum does not request funds from the municipality itself, with this year being the exception due to the unexpected denial of funds from the federal government.

Barton explained to council that the Federal Canada Student Jobs Grant notified the organization that they would not receive funding late into the application process.

"This year, we've been told that we have to have a Revenue Canada payroll account number, which means we would have to process our own payroll," said Cameron. "We don't have the wherewithal to do that, we would have to have a WSIB account, and employer health tax account. We just don't have the resources to do that."

When the organization learned of the denial, they sought help from M.P. Jamie Schmale, who corresponded with the government on behalf of the group. Despite much back-and-forth, they were ultimately denied.

"That means that our operating budget for this year is short funds," said Barton.

"We don't have the volunteers and we don't have the resources to open the museum for the summer, without some help," said Barton. "That is why we have come to you at this point."

The $4,000 would give them valuable time to keep the museum open this season, while creating a plan to ensure the longevity of the site.

The organization hopes to find alternative funding to apply for in the future.

Mayor Dave Burton said that council would receive the request and have a staff member report back to council, before funding could be approved.

"I can't even begin to explain how much you are appreciated as a group and individuals for what you do," said Deputy Mayor Cecil Ryall. "Not only for Wilberforce and this area, but as a whole municipality."

In the past, the summer student has been paid by the municipality, with the organization reimbursing Highlands East after receiving the grant from the federal government.

Cameron told the council that it is not feasible to go through all those steps, for an employee that works for only nine weeks.

Mayor Dave Burton expressed a likeliness of support for the Outpost, but a final decision for funding will be officially announced at a future meeting.

A new deputy for Highlands East fire department

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

This past month's ice storm event took its toll on our emergency systems across Haliburton County.

As evident in Chris Baughman's Highlands East fire chief's report to Highlands East council on Tuesday, April 7, 2026 the fire service has had more calls already than in the past five years.

Luckily, to support the Highlands East fires services, they have newly appointed Deputy Fire Chief Marc Jones to guide towards the future.

Jones visited council over Zoom, introducing himself and providing his warm wishes for the future.

"I'd just like to take the opportunity to thank everybody for welcoming me into this new position at Highlands East," said Jones. "I'm looking forward to assisting the chief with really doing a good job at improving the fire service for the residents of Highlands East in the future."

During the council meeting, Baughman discussed the upcoming emergency scenario that will be taking place on June 22 this year.

Deputy Mayor Cecil Ryall sought clarity regarding the training scenario. Baughman explained that while the scenario is different every year, it will have a similar setup as last year's emergency scenario and will be taking place in Minden.

Ryall said that the program has been invaluable, asking the other council members to attend, if able.

"I went last year, I found it absolutely unbelievable in the way that we were able to identify issues," said Ryall.

The annual emergency meeting exercise involves the County's emergency control group members including Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, OPP, Ontario Hydro, the Health Unit and Emergency Management Ontario.

The scenario will validate emergency plans, test communication systems, train personnel through the simulation including tabletop exercises, drills, and full-scale exercises.

"These annual events focus on evaluating response effectiveness, identifying resource gaps, and improving coordination among [the organizations]," writes the report to council.

There have been a record number of emergency calls so far this year, with 86 calls from January to the end of March

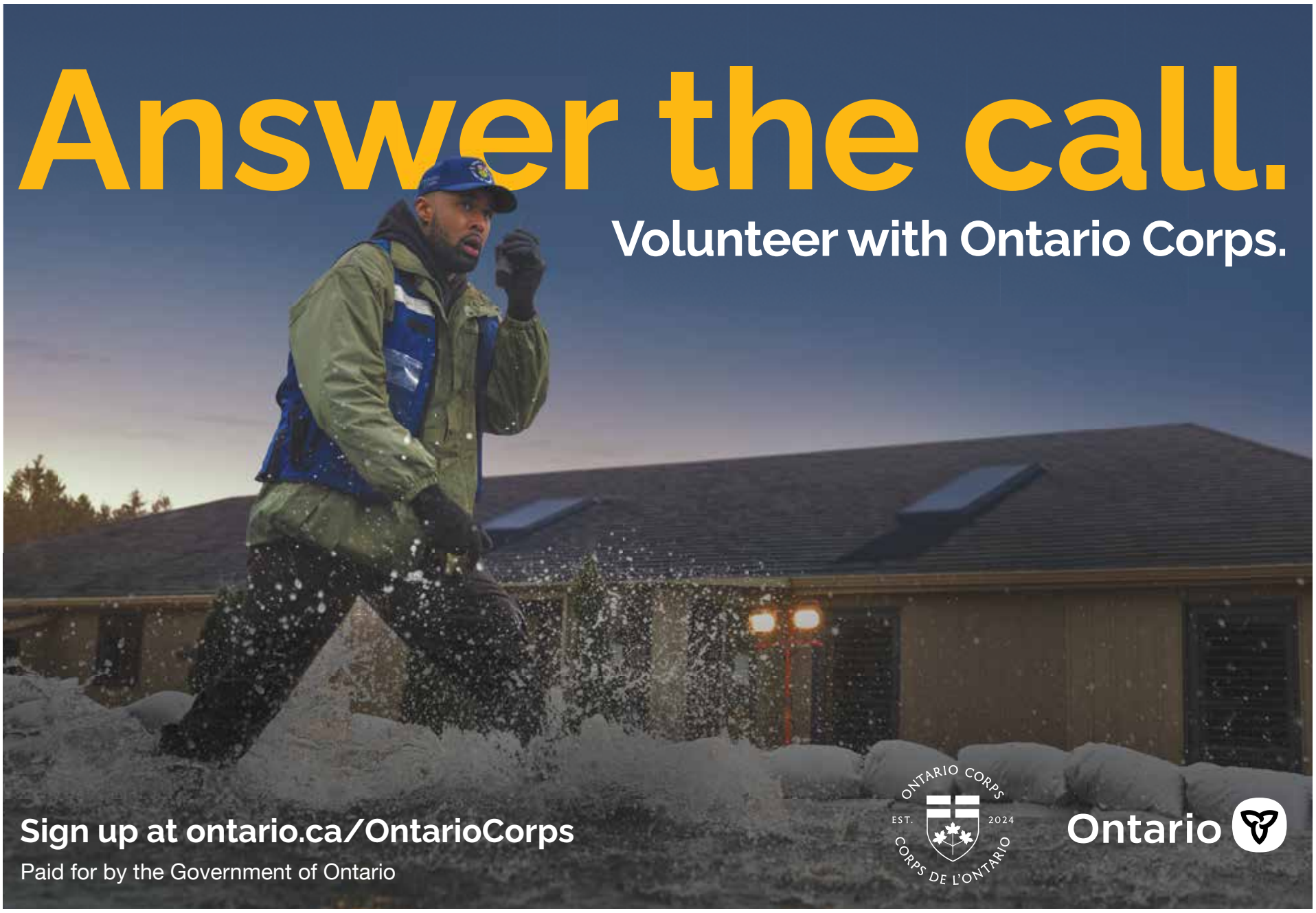
To put it in perspective, there were a total of 56 calls for the entire year of 2025.

As the weather gets warmer, it is crucial to remind others that Highlands East does not allow daytime burning, with fires only being allowed from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Councillor Cam McKenzie asked about the recent updates to the Forest Fire Prevention Act, which is now the Wildland Fire Management Act. He asked Chief Baughman if there is a mandate to change plans at the municipal level.

"I was involved with the writing of those, in, I think 1996," said McKenzie.

Baughman said that he has contacted the MNR, but has not received word of having to change anything yet.



Off-road rally hopes to rock Highlands East

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Off roading enthusiasts are waiting with bated breath for Highlands East council's decision of the ROCKandLAND Off-Road Rally.

The event was discussed during the regular meeting of council on Tuesday, April 7. The organization, connected to ROCKandLAND Forestry, requested the use of the Robert McCausland Community Centre this summer. While the event is aimed to take place in July or August, an actual date has not been determined.

Once the organizers know they can host the event in Gooderham, further planning can be done.

The community centre space and surrounding areas will be used for parking of trucks, trailers, and campers. Tent camping will also be offered to visitors.

"They are looking at having approximately 100 participants," said Robyn Rogers, municipal clerk for Highlands East.

Rogers outlined to the council that the event will be run in similar fashion to the Corduroy Enduro. This includes a regular rental agreement, insurance, garbage and recycling pickup, and a bring-your-own alcohol permit.

The organization's request asked that if there is a community fire pit available on the property, that they would like to use it. If there is not one, the participants would not be having campfires.

The event hosts would use the space for five days, Wednesday through Sunday, to allow for setup, hosting the event, and cleanup.

On the Saturday of the event, they hope to host a barbecue when rally participants return, requesting space in the kitchen to prepare food. There would also be an awards ceremony Saturday evening.

The organization says that they have spoken with the Haliburton and Baysville ATV groups who have no concerns regarding the event.

The route of the rally has not been determined yet, but they plan on scouting the course when thawed and trails are opened for the season. Rally participants will be given GPS files to keep them on track.

At this step in the planning process, council is approving in principle. Further details would need to be discussed, as well as availability of the community centre.

Deputy Mayor Cecil Ryall said that the event sounded like a great idea, but brought awareness to the possibility of the slight risk of increased damage to the property. This is due to the bigger size of equipment needed for the event.

Ryall asked if there is something like a deposit in place, that if grass is damaged during the event, that it could be repaired.

Rogers said that in the past, they have had terms in the secondary agreement that the lands have to be put back to the condition before the event began.

Staff will be in contact with the event organization and work towards an appropriate agreement, before bringing the topic back for council's approval.

North Hastings Fish Hatchery kick–off campaign

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

There is great work in conservation from our neighbours to the east with the goal of fish conservation.

The North Hastings Fish Hatchery, located in Bancroft, is a valued organization with 58 per cent of their reared fish in 2025 going into the waters of Highlands East.

"We had another great year at the hatchery last year," opened Ian Hendry, to Highlands East council on Tuesday, April 7.

Hendry visited council through Zoom to provide an update on their hatchery.

He told council that last year, the fish hatchery stocked 4,500 trout, down from the previous year's 8,000.

"That's due to an issue that we had with the eggs the previous year," he said.

The fry are raised at the hatchery for a year and a half before being released in local waters.

Hendry was proud to tell council that they raise the largest stock of trout fry in the province.

Last year, 2,600 lake trout embraced the refreshing waters of Highlands East. Fish were released in Dark Lake, Hudson, and Paudash Lake. Paudash was the largest recipient of the hatchery's lake trout, receiving 1,949 in total.

The hatchery spent over $48,500 last year to operate the facility. That is slightly lower than typical, running around $50,000.

To raise the fish, volunteers donate an estimated 5,000 hours of their time in raising the fish and keeping them healthy. The hatchery is run 24/7 and this is their 19th year of operation.

Recently, the hatchery has started to run into issues with faulty and aging equipment.

One of their wells is no longer giving them water, Hendry told the council.

Relying on five different wells that feed their hatchery, he said that there will be an additional $30,000 needed to pay for the costs related to drilling a new well.

"I can't thank Highlands East enough for your contributions and your help over the years," said Hendry. "I hope to see that you can help us out again in the future."

Deputy Mayor Cecil Ryall requested information on any upcoming dinners with the hatchery, which Hendry happily obliged to keep the council informed in the future.

"We did our fin clipping a few weeks back and we had to turn people away," said Hendry. "That is for the first time ever that we had to do that."

At the clipping event, held on March 18, 5,000 fish were clipped to track the year they are released into our local waters.

The hatchery's well kick-off campaign is just over halfway funded. This well will ensure a reliable water source for the fish fry, support local conservation efforts, and install a brand new pump for collecting the water.

With their fundraising campaign only around 50 per cent right now, they are needing support from the community to keep the fish hatchery running.

If you are interested in supporting the North Hastings Fish Hatchery, please visit their website at fishhatchery.ca.

Light Recycling

Dysart ratepayers can drop off light bulbs and tubes for recycling at Haliburton, Harcourt, and West Guilford Landfills during regular operating hours.

☑Accepted: light bulbs and tubes, including incandescent, compact fluorescent, fluorescent tubes, halogen, HID, LED, UV.

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☒Light bulbs and tubes DON'T go in the garbage.

Municipality of Dysart et al

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Bookmark contest sees record entries

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Bookworms can attest that losing your page is the most frustrating thing as a reader.

If you are like me, you use the library's receipt as your bookmark which slowly deteriorates, and is so thin it flies out of the book at a moment's notice.

But look no farther than your local library for a nice new bookmark.

Recently, the Haliburton County Public Library (HCPL) hosted their annual bookmark contest, open to all age groups.

"We had our highest participation yet, with 60 entries across all three age groups," said Shawna Gamblen, programming and outreach coordinator for HCPL. "It's been incredible to see the creativity and thought put into each design."

The recently closed contest, which invites participants to design a bookmark that is two inches by seven inches, had a record number of participants that entered, says Gamblen.

This year's theme for the bookmark contest was My Favourite Book. Over the years, the winning bookmark designs have become a huge hit for library visitors.

"Our bookmarks add a really nice touch to the reading experience," said Gamblen. "You can pick one up right at checkout, and each one features local artwork from our patrons, includes all of our branches and contact info on the back, and is printed with the support of the Friends of the Library."

"They're a small way we help connect readers to their library and community."

For Gamblen, her favourite novel is *Women Who Run with the Wolves* by Clarissa Pinkola Estés.

"It inspires a sense of wild strength and resilience and I picture a design with someone running alongside a wolf, with piercing eyes and natural, untamed elements," she said.

Participants were invited to use any art form with their bookmark, from photography to collage.

For the winning artists, their prize is seeing your artwork printed as the bookmark and given out to visitors to the libraries across the county.

Gamblen says that the excitement surrounding the bookmark contest has been growing year after year.

Now in its fourth year, the library says that the program has seen an outpour of support from the community.

Winners of the bookmark design contest will be announced just before the May long weekend.

A hole in one

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School hosted a cornhole tournament this past week in the school gymnasium. Students from all grades dressed up to compete in the event, with prizes and celebrations for the winners. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Youth excel in OPP's academy

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

It was not long ago that becoming a police officer was every kid's dream.

For provincial constable Joel Imbeau, that dream persisted throughout high school. Even when his principal told him that becoming a cop was harder than winning the lottery.

Alongside cadet Victoria Preddy and officer Joshua Dennys, Imbeau now gets to share that dream with local high school students.

The Haliburton Highlands OPP Youth Academy was brought to the County by Haliburton Highlands detachment commander Deb McClure, who had learned of the program from the West region of the OPP.

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School students are some of the first groups of students to take part in the police academy program. Those accepted will benefit from the program being counted towards their volunteer hours. Of around thirty applicants, 20 were accepted.

The program, which began on March 25, is running for six weeks.

Imbeau says that the core values of the program is about youth engagement, recruitment, and youth ambassadorship. By introducing the youth to policing at a young age, the goal is to inspire students to stay out of trouble, seek a good education, and become service ambassadors within their own community.

Students also receive a certificate of completing the youth policing program, which can be put on their resume.

He says that he would have greatly benefited from a similar program when he was growing up.

Working with students is very important for both community building and to inspire students, says instructor Preddy. She is excited to learn more about the youth who live in the area she strives to protect.

Students in the police academy have visitors from different aspects of the OPP coming each week. So far, the students have learned about the OPP's special K9 unit, the Emergency Response Team, and the specialized vehicles with the OPP.

In the future, the students will learn from human trafficking experts, traffic collision specialists, and crime detection.

With the specialized experts coming to the county from throughout the central region, Imbeau says that he is proud of the central team. Every instructor has brought excitement to the youth and are beaming with smiles at the end of the day.

He has also had stellar feedback from both the students and their parents.

With this exceptional feedback, they already plan on hosting the police academy for high school students next year.

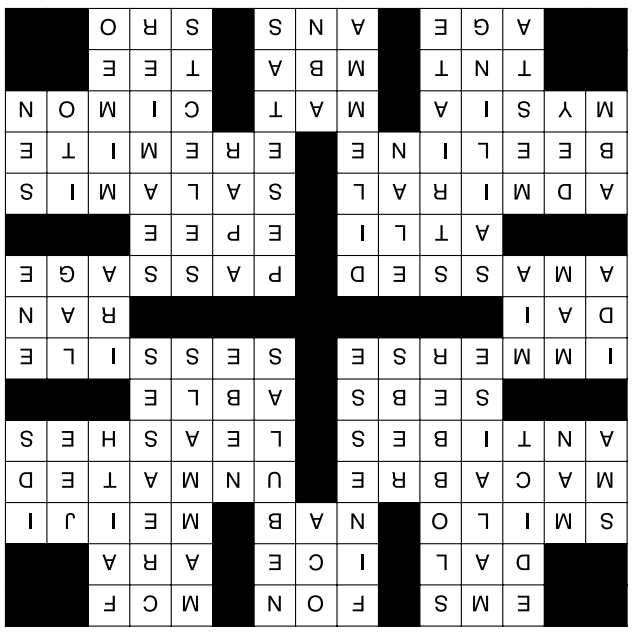
"They have been super engaged," said Imbeau. "They also ask a lot of thought out questions."

Preddy says that the excitement and engagement of the students is greatly encouraging. The local OPP detachment has already been in talks to do more public engagement.

After the academy has ended, students will provide their feedback which will shape the program in the future.

With the success of the program, expect to see our Haliburton High students protecting our streets in the future.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



SUDOKU SOLUTION

6	5	9	1	4	2	7	8	3
3	7	8	6	9	5	4	2	1
4	2	1	8	7	3	9	6	5
2	9	3	7	5	8	6	1	4
7	4	6	2	3	1	8	5	9
8	1	5	4	6	9	2	3	7
5	3	4	9	8	6	1	7	2
1	6	7	5	2	4	3	9	8
9	8	2	3	1	7	5	4	6

Fun with fundraising

It was a sold out event for the Minden Community Food Centre's recent charitable dinner. The event brought Scott Russell and Tracy Wilson out to chat with dinner guests who enjoyed a three course meal, conversation, and charity auction. From left, Jim Wilson,Tracy Gilbert, and David Elliott pause for a photo.

Bob Goss and Bruce Bain played music at the Minden Community Food Centre's charity dinner held on April 11 at the Minden Curling Club. /photos by Thomas Smith, staff

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The Art of Deception

The Loop Troupe's 12-person whodunnit play kicked off this past weekend at the Wilberforce Legion with two very full houses. The dinner and drinks theatre event combined efforts with the local Legion, with the storyline centering around a beloved missing painting. With jokes, accusations, and a whole lot of bad decisions, the show was met with great success from all those who attended. /TIM YANO staff photographer.

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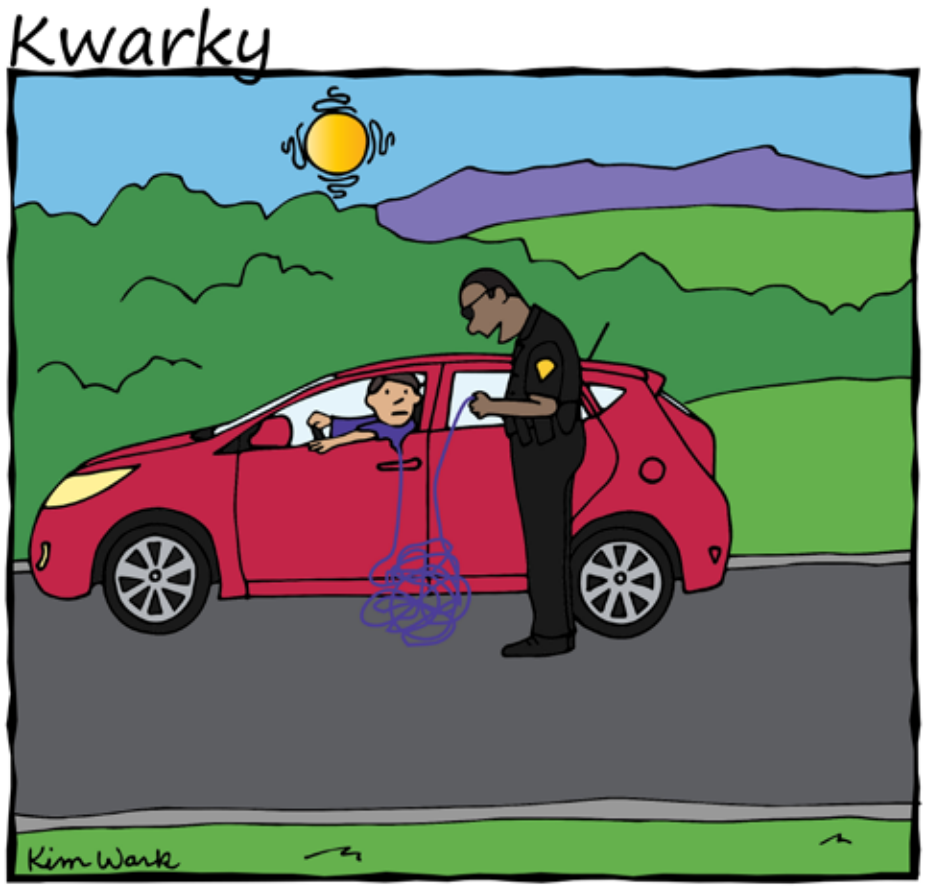

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3							2	
4		1	8					
	9			5				
			2		1			
	1	5		6				7
		4	9			1	7	
		7						8
		2	3					

Level: Intermediate

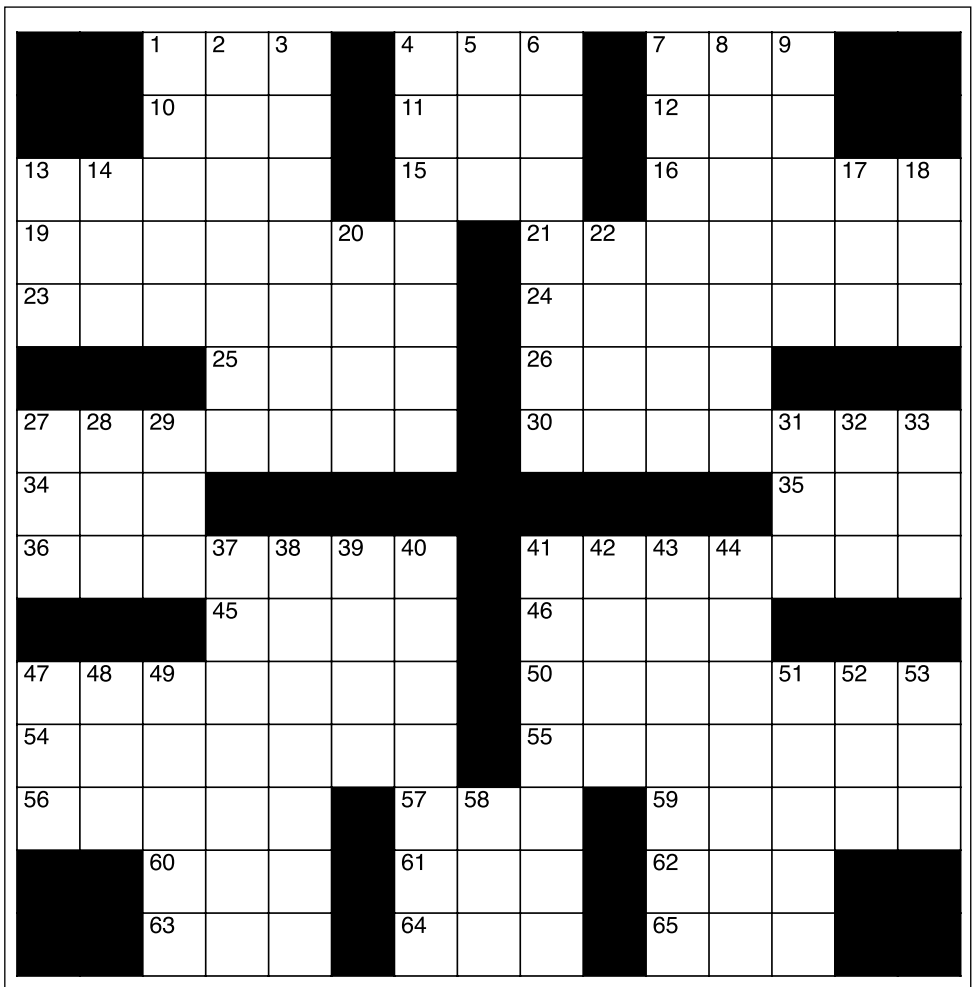
Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 15



CLUES ACROSS

1. Health care pros
4. A person inhabiting Benin
7. One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
10. Split pulses
11. Frozen water
12. Small constellation
13. Perennial mountain rice
15. Pick up
16. Japanese historical period
19. Suggesting the horror of death and decay
21. Unattached
23. Fishing port in SE France
24. Products for dogs
25. One point south of southeast
26. Having the skill or resources to do something
27. Involve oneself deeply
30. Immobile
34. __ pai dong: Hong Kong food stall
35. Move quickly on foot
36. Gathered
41. A way through
45. Another name for Thor
46. Sharp dueling sword
47. The supreme commander of a fleet
50. Seasoned sausages
54. Path
55. Christian hermit
56. Ancient region of Asia Minor
57. Where wrestlers go to work
59. Roman statesman
60. Explosive
61. Licensed for Wall Street
62. Where golfers start
63. Grow old
64. Autonomic nervous system
65. No seats available

CLUES DOWN

1. A legally binding command
2. General feeling of discomfort
3. Dribble
4. Soft touch
5. South American plant
6. Clouds of gas and dust in space
7. Warm-blooded vertebrates
8. Lines created by folding
9. Strong belief
13. Senior officer
14. Adult
17. Joint entrance examination in India
18. Passports and drivers' licenses are two
20. Those who go against an accepted authority
22. One point east of northeast
27. Journalist Tarbell
28. One's mother (British)
29. Nowhere to be found
31. A way to save for old age
32. Fall behind
33. Midway between northeast and east
37. The work of a sailor
38. Mark with striae
39. Energy, style and enthusiasm
40. Sticky situation
41. Monetary units of Spain
42. Three-banded armadillo
43. Chooses
44. More disreputable
47. Defensive nuclear weapon
48. 'The Partridge Family' actress Susan
49. Livestock owners assn. in Spain
51. Duplicating machine (abbr.)
52. OJ trial judge
53. Politician
58. Airborne (abbr.)

Answers on page 15

The birds and the bees; pollinator talk in Minden

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Kathleen Patnode presents on behalf of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation on Tuesday, April 7. Her presentation focused on nocturnal pollinators including fireflies and butterflies. /Thomas Smith staff

Pollination isn't all done by bees and butterflies. In fact, for some plants, a majority of pollination occurs at night.

On Tuesday, April 7, Kathleen Patnode, of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation visited the Minden Community Centre for the Minden and District Horticultural Society's meeting to present "Secret Lives of Nocturnal Insects: Moths and Fireflies."

The Xerces Society is named after the Xerces blue butterfly, the first American species of butterfly to go extinct from habitat loss. Their goal is to work with farmers in reducing pesticide use, protect invertebrates, and provide outreach and community engagement to help people better understand invertebrates around us.

Patnode, an ecologist for over 30 years, has dedicated the majority of her life towards protecting the environment and speaking up for nature's most underappreciated animal group: insects.

"If you think about pollinators, you have this image in your head about bumblebees or butterflies," said Patnode. "We tend to think first about daytime insects and very little about ones that are in the night,"

Patnode explained that plants are pollinated at all hours of the day.

The benefits of being pollinated at night remains largely unanswered, with the biggest assumption being for water retention.

The common features of nighttime pollinated flowers are pale, white flowers.

"If you have walked in your garden in the moonlight, you may have realized that it is way easier to see light coloured flowers," said Patndoe. "That is also true for insects. However, the biggest draw for nocturnal pollinators is the splendid fragrance produced at night."

Patnode urges everyone to go have a sniff of your palest plants, she assures they will smell the strongest at night.

The predominant nocturnal pollinator is moths. There are also some beetles (such as fireflies) and bees that are nighttime pollinators. In the southern United States and Mexico, fruit eating bats are also considered pollinators.

There are three moth species for every one bee, says Patnode. There are also a whopping 12,000 species of moths in North America.

"For a majority of them, they are night organisms," said Patnode. "You realize, pretty quickly there are way more moths than butterflies. There are 15 moths for every type of butterfly."

Moths come in all shapes in sizes, with some imitating things like bird droppings, or having the eyes of a predator on its wings. For the rosy maple moth of Canada, it's bright pink and yellow let it blend perfectly into the blossoms of a maple tree.

Caterpillars of moths provide an important food source for other creatures, as well as being highly adapted to feed on woody plant structures. For some bears, a huge portion of their diet includes the caterpillars, sometimes eating over 20 pounds per day.

For many moths, they do not have any mouth parts, while others feed on flower nectar at night.

Fireflies, actually a type of beetle, spend a majority of their life in their larval form, after hatching from an egg. These beetles can stay as larvae for as long as two years. Only before they are ready to mate will the beetles pupate and turn into beetles.

"When I moved into my home, we had fireflies in our front yard," said Patnode. "Now we don't have them anymore."

If you look under the leaf litter in your backyard, there is a good chance you will find the larvae, or 'glowworms' in the leaf litter.

Compared to daytime insects, little is known about nighttime pollinators. Patnode says that everyone has the ability to help invertebrates in your own backyard.

One of the biggest threats to nocturnal invertebrates is light pollution. Using the stars and moonlight to navigate at night, they are uniquely troubled by light pollution that disorients them.

An insect's entire life cycle could take place on your patio.

"This is the one group of organisms where it doesn't take very much land or effort to actually make a difference not just for one animal, but for a whole group of animals," said Patnode.

The four methods to help invertebrates Patnode recommended include:

- Reduce nighttime lighting around your property. In some spaces of the yard, provide shaded areas for insects to refuge from light pollution. Always evaluate if lights are needed to be on all hours of the day. Motion sensor lights are a good option.

- Leave leaves on the ground in the spring. If you need to clean up leaves, gently pile them around your flower beds. As a rule of them, wait for the temperature to reach above 10 degrees Celsius for more than a week.

- Cut your lawn on a higher setting to provide vegetation for insects to live.

- Reduce the amount of pesticides you use. If needed, only conduct spot treatments of pesticides.

- Contribute back to community invertebrate research through reporting your insect finds on iNaturalist and other community-based ecology initiatives.

- Contact your local councillor and express your desire to preserve Minden's night sky and to make improvements to better local habitats for invertebrates

The horticultural society is always looking for new members and meets on the first Tuesday of each month. If you are interested in joining their ranks, please visit mindenhorticulturalsociety.ca. They regularly have interesting presenters and are a wealth of horticulture information.

> *"We tend to think first about daytime insects and very little about ones that are in the night ...*
>
> — Kathleen Patnode, Xerces Society

Notice
(Applicant – Ivy/Nailor/Hansen)

In the matter of the *Municipal Act* and in the matter of a proposed By-law of the Corporation of the Municipality of Highlands East to close, stop-up and convey certain portions of a Original Shore Road Allowance along the shore of **Minniecock Lake**, more particularly hereinafter described.

Notice Is Hereby Given, pursuant to the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, and the Municipal Procedures, that the Township Council of The Corporation of the Municipality of Highlands East proposes to consider and if deemed advisable, to pass at a virtual meeting on **Tuesday, the 12th day of May, 2026**, at 9:30 a.m., a By-Law to close, stop-up and convey to the adjacent land owners the following described lands:

Part of the Original Shore Road Allowance in front of Lot 31, Concession 15, Township of Glamorgan, Municipality of Highlands East, County of Haliburton, shown as Part 1 on Plan of Survey 19R-11215, made by Bishop Geyer Surveying Inc. **completed October 31, 2024.**

The Plan of Survey 19R-11215 is available to you for inspection by you making an appointment at the Municipality of Highlands East offices, Wilberforce, Ontario.

The above-described lands, by resolution, have been declared to be surplus. If you wish to attend the virtual meeting, please call or e-mail the Municipal Clerk prior to the day of the public meeting so you can be provided with a link or phone number for the meeting. If you do not have the capability to attend a virtual meeting, please provide written comments to the Municipal Clerk prior to the public meeting.

Any person or his or her counsel, solicitor or agent who attends the virtual meeting shall be afforded an opportunity to make representations in respect of the within matter.

And Take Further Notice that if the public wishes to participate regarding the purchase of Shoreline Road Allowance please contact the Municipal Clerk.

Dated at the Municipality of Highlands East, Wilberforce, Ontario this 14th day of April, 2026.

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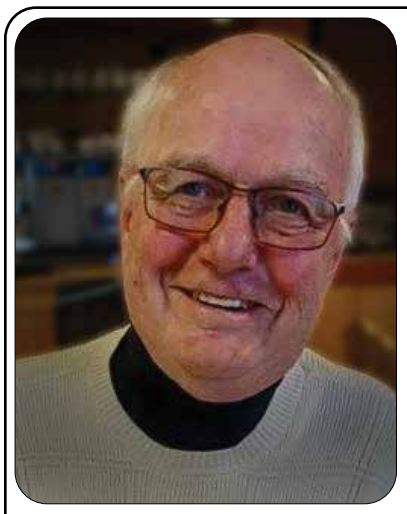

Ted Burbidge
Resident of Algonquin Highlands

It is with deep love and fond remembrance that the family of Ted Burbidge announces his peaceful passing, surrounded by family, on April 7, 2026, at the age of 85.

Ted was born on May 16, 1940, in Guelph, Ontario, to Norman Alfred and Elsie Jane (Creamer). He was the middle of three children and is survived by his sister Marilyn and brother Peter (Ann). Ted graduated from the Hamilton Institute of Technology as a textile technologist and went on to have a successful career in sales and business.

Ted started coming to Halls Lake as a young boy, beginning a connection that would span 80 years. He enjoyed working with his hands and, in 1972, started to build his own cottage. It was a lifelong labour of love, and, eventually, the family cottage became their permanent home, a true reflection of his dedication, craftsmanship, and love for Halls Lake.

Ted had a great sense of humour and lived a life full of love and adventure, and enjoyed spending time with family and friends from all over the world. Whether it was a building project at the cottage, water, or winter skiing, fishing, curling, dancing, golfing, doing community volunteer work, or hanging around the pond with the beavers, he found joy in life's everyday moments.

Ted will be forever in the hearts of his wife of 61 years, Elaine, and his children James (Jenny) and Jennifer (David). He will be lovingly remembered by his grandchildren, Kaitlyn (Sal), Melissa, Zachary, Ben, Holly, and great-grandchildren Matthew and Alessio. Ted will be dearly missed and in the hearts of all who knew him.

Memorial Service

Friends and family are invited to attend at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 HWY #118, Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0 (705) 457-9209 on Saturday, April 18th, 2026 at 1:00 for a Memorial Service in Ted's honour. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation would be greatly appreciated by Ted's family.

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Board hit again

A few dollars more

by Andrew Milne

The school board had yet another unpleasant surprise to deal with at its special budget meeting last week.

On top of the $270,000 cut from the provincial grant, the board was handed a memo from the municipality of Dysart et al announcing that a tax appeal dating back to 1991 was successful and the board's share was $149,000.

Business superintendent Jim Bradley said he could only apologize to the board as he made the announcement. He said that his preparation of possible budget scenarios did not take the amount into consideration. Administration, he explained, simply didn't have time to deal with it.

The meeting was told that a Dysart landowner had appealed his taxes, and had won that appeal. The $149,000 was the board's share of the larger total appeal amount of $220,730. The remaining $71,730 of the refund will have to be absorbed by the Municipality of Dysart et al.

Bradley said briefly that the rebate is related to the issue of the value of forested lands. Dysart reeve Murray Fearrey said later the appeal did not deal directly with the managed forest tax rebate issue or the protest of 1994. Dysart et al's letter on the subject described the appeal as retroactive to 1991.

The $149,000 amount is the second unpleasant surprise for the board in the last few weeks prior to their last budget. The $270,000 cut from the province — equal to last year's — followed on the heels of an announcement from Minister of Education and Training John Snobelen that education funding would be kept stable for 1997-1998. The board is heading into its budget setting process this week.

Fearrey said last week that while the $72,000 Dysart will

(more on page 4)

Her first taste of ice cream

The musical production Anne of Green Gables opened this past weekend with a splash. At each performance the audience was delighted with the bouncy musical numbers and heart-warming story. The first act of the play ends with a picnic scene in which the heroine, Anne Shirley, played by Shirleen Dehaan, gets her first taste of ice cream when Gilbert Blythe, played by Bryn Gray, is tripped and accidentally pushes a cone into her face. To enable the scene to be completed, the staging called for just a small amount of ice cream to be left on her face, however, as the photo above shows, during the dress rehearsal, things got a little out of hand. The ice cream cone was fully charged (with whipped cream) and as Gilbert tripped, all of Anne's face, her hands, part of her costume and the stage were splattered. Needless to say, Anne and other cast members, including Kate Campbell as Diana Barry, left, and Rebeka Bjelis playing Josie Pye, right, were surprised by the unscripted consequences of collision and momentarily slipped out of character. Shirleen quickly recovered and completed the scene while the other members of the cast struggled to maintain their composure. As those who have attended subsequent performances can attest, the ice cream scene is a little less messy but just as enjoyable as this first run-through. For more photos from Anne of Green Gables please turn to page 5.

Mixed findings in amalgamation studies

by Jerry Grozelle

Four committees from the United Townships of Galway and Cavendish have been struck to study restructuring, specifically how the municipality could benefit from one or more of four scenarios. One committee's mandate was to determine the benefits, if any, of retaining the status quo -- the municipality of Galway-Cavendish remaining as it is, within the County of Peterborough. The second group studied the possible effects if the municipality left Peterborough County and joined Haliburton County. Group three's directive was to see if there are any benefits to be gained from amalgamating with the municipalities of Harvey, Chandos and Burleigh-Anstruther. The fourth group's mandate was to analyze the possible advantages of amalgamating with Snowdon and Glamorgan, within Haliburton County.

Those committees presented their findings at the April 8 Galway-Cavendish council meeting.

Don MacKay, chair of the first group, noted that there were no dissenting opinions within his group of five committee members. He also stated that his committee studied only the option of amalgamation with Harvey Township because analysis of statistics from Chandos, Belmont-Methuen and Burleigh-Anstruther would have been too lengthy to be accomplished within the time frame allotted. Therefore, a "very general" comparison between Haliburton and Peterborough counties was conducted, with a further comparative study between Galway-Cavendish and Harvey Township.

"The status quo is the way to go," he told council. "A move to Haliburton would not serve the highest percentage of the population of Galway-Cavendish.

The report states that Galway-Cavendish is a well administered municipality, with a lower per household cost than Harvey Township.

"Only if amalgamation becomes mandatory, this committee would be sympathetic to an amalgamation with Harvey Township in the County of Peterborough," MacKay stated.

Later, in the report's conclusions, it is stated that "Harvey Township has 13 times more welfare costs than Galway-Cavendish and yet only has 4.5 times more permanent population."

It is further noted that Harvey has four times the office staff and only 1.5 times more households. It also spends 2.98 times more per year than Galway-Cavendish.

Group One's report made several statements and quoted numerous figures that have been refuted by several members of other committees. Conclusions in almost a dozen points have been challenged, complete with an analysis of where each statement was in error and a list of contact people who can verify the authenticity of the corrections.

"I have some problems with that report," said Galway-Cavendish deputy-reeve Peter Franzen, who is among those who have challenged Group One's report. Accordingly, he documented his objections to the findings stated in the report, including:

1. The figures quoted for the specific grants per household in Peterborough County amount to $176.78 compared to $456.39 in Haliburton County are incorrect.

2. The conclusion that Haliburton is more dependent on grants

(more on page 3)

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